

going out to join their various regiments in Egypt and India. The rest were mostly English merchants and travelers bound in different directions. Among the officers was Col. Fred. Burnaby, the author of the famous "Ride to Khiva," who was going out to join Gen. Baker Pasha and his almost forlorn hope in Egypt.

We were in sight of the Greek coast and the Isles of Greece all day long, the last land visible before dark being Candia. The weather very pleasant, but very cold. Next afternoon we sighted the Egyptian Coast and by 6 p. m. had dropped anchor in Port Said at the mouth of the Canal. Some fifteen or twenty huge steamers lay there at anchor; some bound through the Canal, and some that had just come through. Port Said is a creation of the Canal and is now a very lively town of about 6,000 people, composed of Egyptians, Arabs, and the rough refuse of all kinds of Europeans. It is bound to become quite a thriving city eventually and I hope it will some day have some kind of government. It is now literally without law or order. After dinner we went ashore for a look about town. A young Egyptian who rejoiced in the pet name of "Champagne Charley," which some former voyager had given him, offered to conduct us up town. We were much interested, for here we saw genuine Arabs, Nubians and Egyptians, uncouth and untrained sons of the desert and bearded sons of the Prophet. Some of the Egyptians were handsome and good-looking fellows but the majority seemed to wear in their appearance the dilapidation of ages. It was an Oriental picture and our first introduction to the ancient and fabled East. We wandered into the bazaars and bought a few photographs of Egyptian scenes and also some Egyptian cigarettes which are very choice. "Champagne Charley" then conducted us to a large cafe where there was a motley crowd assembled, drinking beer and listening to some passably good music or "bucking" a roulette table in an adjoining room. We remained a while and then came out for another walk in the main street. There was considerable life, for, besides the Oriental and modern inhabitants of the town out for an evening walk, were also the officers and sailors of the merchant steamers and of two English war vessels and also the men of the 42nd Highlanders who are stationed there, looking into the bazaars or into the French music cafes and roulette tables that line the whole street. At 11 p. m. we went back to the ship, for "Champagne Charley" was kind enough to inform us that after it got very late he would not like to be responsible for our lives there was so many Greek and Arab cut-throats about.

Next morning at daybreak we started through the Canal; six other large steamers started at the same time, two ahead and four behind us. It was a novel sight to see seven large steamers in slow procession down the canal. Six miles an hour is the limit of speed allowed. We often met large steamers, men-of-war and troop ships coming from the other way, then, whichever according to regulation, had the right of way, would pass on, while the rest tied up to the side of the Canal. Sometimes our own procession had to tie up while the others passed by, and then again those coming would tie up as we passed on. Among the steamers we passed were quite a number of huge French transports filled with troops bound for the expedition in Tonquin. This wonderful canal has been so often described I will not attempt it now. It is a grand work and has been of incalculable benefit to the commerce of the world. But they need a second canal now for the present one can barely accommodate all the vessels that seek a passage. De Lesseps is planning to dig one on the basis of exclusive right, but the English Government very naturally desire that a second canal should be controlled by them for it is their highway to India, and 90 per cent. of ships now passing through are English. I presume they will arrive at some understanding soon and build the canal for English mercantile interests are clamoring for it.

We passed by Menzaleh Lake during the day. Thousands of pelicans, flamingoes, and other aquatic birds covered the sand banks for miles. Beyond there was nothing but sandy desert on either side. We often saw Arabs with their camels moving along

the banks of the canal. Sometimes one, and occasionally whole caravans of them. I had often seen them in pictures and read of them in travelers' tales; and now I was actually looking at the rude sons of the desert with old flint guns on their back and riding their solemn looking camels. They certainly illustrated the word strange. As we passed the stations on the canal, little Arab boys and girls would run along the bank shouting "backsheesh!" and were occasionally rewarded with an orange or a copper. They do not move at night on the canal, so at sundown we tied up at Ismailia the now almost deserted town that De Lesseps founded. From our deck we could see the magnificent palace which the Khedive had built there.

At day-break we started again and in a few hours were in Bitter Lakes. It is a broad sheet of water and eight miles across, and now commenced a race for the other side. Our ship proved to be the swiftest and we reached the entrance on the other side first. The other ships had all changed positions and two were struggling hard for second place. We reached Suez by dark, and there met the Deccan and Sutledge, the two P. & O. boats that had come through from London bound for China and Australia respectively. And now commenced a general exchange of passengers, baggage and mails. A great many of our passengers changed into the other vessels, but we received as many more in exchange who had come right from London to connect with our boat. All night long there was a noisy bustle, the Lascar sailors and Arab boatmen bungling through their work in a reckless and boisterous manner.

We were the last to get away and at 4 a. m., we up anchor and headed for the Red Sea through the Gulf of Suez. Travelers generally dread the voyage through the Red Sea it is so dreadfully hot, but up to the time we entered the Gulf of Aden, we had deliciously cool weather and it was only then that we changed into lighter clothing. The officers tell me that Dec. and Jan. are usually pleasant as we have had it, but all the other months become at times very oppressive with heat, and in summer it is almost intolerable.

We have enjoyed the voyage down very much. Our officers are very pleasant fellows, there are many agreeable people among our fellow voyagers; we have good living, and each day glided along pleasantly, in the usual manner of shipboard life. Each day we passed numerous steamers bound up, and this afforded us a little novelty and excitement to make out the class, nationality, and company to which the ships belonged.

For the first day in the Red Sea, we were in sight of land, the coast of Arabia on one side and Egypt on the other.

I was reading "Eothen" that most charming work on oriental travel and with the shores of two famous countries of the Orient on either side a bright Arabian sky overhead, and the recent brief glimpses I had had of oriental people, all seemed to lend a sort of romantic reality to the book and I could almost fancy I accompanied the traveler at every step. I need not assure you I wish I might do so in reality. You know we were to have visited Egypt and I had long anticipated that visit with expectant pleasure but the disturbed and unsettled condition of affairs in that country would make a visit there at the present time rather undesirable, and besides our time is limited. So we had to forego the pleasure of seeing the wonderful and picturesque land of the Pharaohs and Khedives, the scene of so many of the romantic fables and tales that have always charmed me. I daresay however it is just as well that I have not gone there for now all the old pictures and tales remain for me in the realms of romance, whereas my practical spirit might otherwise have been disillusioned had I come in contact with the incapacity, laziness, and impractical character of modern Egypt.

On the morning of the fifth day from Suez (Jan. 24), we reached Aden, having passed the straits of Babel-mandeb and the island Perim during the night. We had crossed the Tropic of Cancer two nights previous and were now in the Torrid Zone, and as we lay anchored at Aden, we felt the heat intensely. Officers and pas-

sengers nearly all appeared in white suits and pith helmet hats for protection against the sun; though some of those who went ashore returned with severe headaches.

Aden is called the Gibraltar of the Red Sea for it is situated much like Gibraltar on a rocky peninsular. It is owned and fortified by the English, and besides an original population of about 5,000, composed of Arabs, Negroes, Somalis and Abyssinians, there is quite a considerable garrison of English and Indian troops stationed there.

Soon after we dropped anchor, the Venetia was surrounded by native boats and all sorts of strange things were offered for sale, ostrich feathers, and eggs, horns and leopard skins, etc. etc. Soon a swarm of little dug out canoes paddled out to us and the occupants—the blackest of black little negroes and Abyssinians—jumped out swimming and diving about the ship for the coins thrown to them, very much like our native boys do at home and with equal dexterity. But they were an ugly lot of little rascals, some of them with their hair dyed red, or bleached white, and all chattering like a parcel of monkeys.

As we were to remain six hours we went ashore, and drove up about four miles to the town, for at the landing are only a few stores and warehouses.

We visited the market where we saw camels, donkeys, and beautiful gazelles for sale. At the bazaars we saw ostrich feathers in great quantities, and many other strange things that we had seen among the boatmen; in fact, we "did" the town. Of course we were much interested in looking at the strange peoples of the place, and their Oriental costumes. It was all new and strange, but still oddly familiar for it was the living pictures of what I had long known in the tales of travel and in pictures. Still, rather than romantic, everything seemed to me extremely barbarous and uncivilized. I am afraid I should require more experience in Oriental travel before I could gain the "true spirit" of appreciation of people's manners, habits and costumes so widely different from our modern civilization. I suppose, however, there must be some excellent traits about these people, which I might find out, but I am sure I never could love an Arab girl; for handsome though they may be in face and figure, the ring in the nose and the bloody disfigurement of the forehead would keep me off. It was nearly evening when we got away and then our course was direct across the Arabian Sea (or Indian Ocean) headed for Bombay.

The weather became cooler after leaving Aden but still it was warm and everyone dressed lightly. At our meals little Indian boys, dressed in white, with red turbans and saris, kept the *punkahs* in motion which kept us cool even to our soup and coffee. Great canvas awnings were spread over all the deck and a canvas tent erected amidship served as a smoking room. The piano was brought up on deck and occasionally, in the evening, some attempt was made at dancing, but the general inclination seemed to be to lounge off on chairs, and in light conversation or reading, to enjoy the simple *dolce far niente* of shipboard life, and thus each day glided along. We don't know, and don't care to know, Monday from Tuesday, or 10 o'clock from 3 o'clock.

The day after leaving Aden there was a ripple of excitement through the ship when it was announced that there was a slave show in sight. Every glass was employed and all eyes were strained towards the slaver as we passed within a mile of him. The black fellows that were managing her were evidently studying us with a little anxiety and were much relieved to observe we were only a merchant steamer. All the young blood among our passengers were for lowering a boat and "going for him," even offering to man the boats, and the captain would have willingly consented but that the laws of the sea forbid a merchantman to interfere in such affairs, and so the fellow pursued his course. He evidently had a good "cargo" and was making a successful voyage along the Arabian coast bound for some port in the Persian Gulf. The slave trade is nothing now compared to what it was a few years since, for the English gunboats and cutters are continually cruising these waters and have frightened off the slavers. But the slave markets of Cairo, Constantinople and

Teheran must be supplied and these black pirates are often successful in "running" a "cargo," for the men-of-war-men cannot be forever dodging in among the Islands and reefs of the Arabian coast, especially the Red Sea.

There was nothing further of special interest during the six days from Aden to Bombay, and on Wednesday morning, January 30, we reached port, landed and soon we were comfortably located in the Esplanade Hotel, and from its broad and cool veranda, contemplated the novelty and strange scenes before us on our first day in India, the "blazing East."

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